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P R A Y E R S

SELECTED FROM THE
NEW TESTAMENT;
KEMPIS OF THE IMITATION
OF CHRIST;

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WILLIAM LAW;

And, chiefly,
PETER STERRY.

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P R A Y E R S.

O HEAVENLY FATHER! INFINITE FATHOMLESS DEPTH OF NEVER-CEASING LOVE! save and deliver me from myself; from the disorderly workings of my fallen, sensual, self-corrupted nature; and let mine eyes see, mine heart and spirit feel and find, THY SALVATION in CHRIST JESUS!

O GOD, who madest me for thyself, to shew forth the glory of thy love and mercy in me, manifest, I humbly beseech thee, the life-giving power of thy holy nature within me! Help me to that true and living faith in thee, which is the mighty conquest of all evil; such strength of hunger and thirst after the birth, life, and spirit of THY HOLY JESUS in my soul, as that every thought,

imagination, and desire of my heart, may be turned from every thing that is not thee, THY HOLY JESUS, and heavenly operation within me !

“ O HOLY JESUS ! Meek Lamb of
 “ GOD, that takest away the sins of the
 “ world ! Bread that came down from
 “ heaven, for the food and sustenance of
 “ fallen creatures ! Life and light of all
 “ holy souls ! help me to that true and
 “ living faith in thee, which is the
 “ continual victory over the world, the
 “ flesh, and the devil ! O do thou open
 “ thyself within me, with thy heavenly
 “ flesh and blood, the strength and sub-
 “ stance, the life and sweetness, of the
 “ divine nature ; thine all-cleansing,
 “ all-purifying, and atoning blood ! that
 “ it may cleanse me from all sin ; may
 “ clear the guilt, and kill the power of
 “ sin within me ! And with thy meek-
 “ ness, humility, patience, resignation,
 “ purity, and love ; that I may be born
 “ again

“ again of thee ; may be in thee a new
“ creature, quickened and revived, led
“ and governed by thy spirit !”

O GOD OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, <sup>Spiritual
Light.</sup>
FATHER OF GLORY ! for the sake of Eph. i. 17.
THY CHRIST and THY GLORY, and in
subordination to it, give me the spirit
of wisdom ; not only a spiritual beam,
but the sun, the spirit himself in my
soul ; that my wisdom may be a personal
knowledge of thee, opening the hea-
venly image by a divine light in my spi-
rit, where it lies veiled by the light of
nature, under the image of the earthly
man ! May this light of knowledge fall
upon my eyes, enlightening them to see
what was always before them, but hid
from them, the riches of thy glory in
me, and my fulness in thee !

“ O FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS <sup>Spiritual
Strength.</sup>
“ CHRIST, of whom the whole family Eph. iii.
“ in heaven and earth is named, grant ^{14—21.}

A 3

“ me,

“ me, according to the riches of thy
 “ glory, to be strengthened with might
 “ by thy SPIRIT in the inner man; that
 “ CHRIST may dwell in my heart by
 “ faith; that being rooted and grounded
 “ in love, I may be able to comprehend,
 “ with all saints, what is the breadth
 “ and length, and depth and height,
 “ and to know THE LOVE OF CHRIST,
 “ which passeth knowledge, that I may
 “ be filled with all the fulness of thee,
 “ my GOD! Now unto him, who is
 “ able to do exceeding abundantly above
 “ all that we can ask or think, according
 “ to the power that worketh in us,
 “ unto him be glory in the church by
 “ CHRIST JESUS, throughout all ages
 “ world without end, Amen!”

O give me the spirit of might, as well
 as of light; that JESUS CHRIST may
 be rooted in my heart by faith, and that
 my faith may be rooted in thy heart by
 thy love! Strengthen me to take in thy
 heights

heights and depths; and to bear what I cannot take in, so as to know by compliance, reverence, and obedience, what I cannot know by comprehension !

O mercifully bestow upon me thy precious and inestimable gift of faith, that I may “ walk continually by its divine
 “ light, and be made more than conqueror over every enemy that wars
 “ against my soul !” And to this faith,
 “ may I give all diligence to add virtue ; 2 Pet. i. 5.
 “ and to virtue, knowledge ; and to
 “ knowledge, temperance ; and to temperance, patience ; and to patience,
 “ godliness ; and to godliness, brotherly
 “ kindness ; and to brotherly kindness,
 “ charity !”

May my faith be an inseparable union Faith. of spirits between thee, my JESUS in heaven, and my soul on earth ! May I never be found alone, nor in company with thy enemies, but thee and me

always together ; me in thee, as mine eternal root ; thou in me, as an unperishing, unfading branch of thyself !

Virtue.

May the divine nature, the power of Christ putting forth itself by virtue of this union, take intire possession of my soul ! May I not be in thee as a tree in winter, when the life is all withdrawn, and sunk down into the root : but may it be ever spring-time ; that the sap of the GOD-HEAD may be ascending from thee into me, as one of thy branches ; that my bed may be ever green ; that faith, which is the union, the marriage-bed of thee and my spirit, may be continually fruitful !

Know-
ledge.

Mayst thou, who actest in me, appear and manifest thyself to me, in all thy love and loveliness ! Mayst thou add to virtue, knowledge ; that I may have, not only the virtue of the divine seed to mould and form my spirit, but the
flower

flower, the spiritual image of the seed,
manifesting itself in it !

O may thy light shine down into the ^{Tempe-}
powers and appetites of my inferior na-^{rance.}
ture, to take away the darkness, impurity,
intemperance, and disorder, from them !
May I be sanctified throughout, in spi-
rit, soul, and body ; that the lower part
of my life, which is most engaged in
flesh, may have a beauty of temperance
and patience upon it, proportionable to
that virtue and knowledge, which, in
the upper part of my life, thou art
pleased to communicate unto me !

Mayst thou, my Sun, my Saviour, ^{Patience.}
ever shine within me warmly and sweet-
ly ; that I may have a peaceful posses-
sion of myself in thy glory, in every
state and condition, and enjoy myself in
thee in the deepest calamity ! O forsake
me not in the winter of old age ! with-
draw not the sap of thy strength and
sweetness,

sweetness, when the strength and comforts of nature fail me, when sorrows and fears hunt me from place to place ! In this winter and old age, may I flourish up on high, and bring forth more abundant fruits of love, purity, and joy in the spirit !

Godli-
ness.

May I have continual communion with thee, in thy person, thy ordinances, and all things ; for thy ordinance is with the sun, the moon, and every creature ! May I see thee, who art invisible to the natural eye, in the court and in the country ; in every act of mine, in every thing that befalls me ! May I have fellowship with the Father, and the Son, in the light of their life, in all my light and darkness, life and death ! May I converse with all things in “ the mystery of godliness, God manifested in “ the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen “ of Angels, preached unto the Gen-
“ tiles,

“ tiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory !”

And as I converse with thee in all things, so may I converse with all things in thee ! The love of thee, as the Father, the fulness ; the love of saints, men, creatures, as children of this Father, as brethren in this fulness, are both godliness and brotherly kindness. O receive every Christian, and every creature in its rank, “ as my own brothers ;” as I hope and pray thou wilt receive myself !

As faith draws forth all from thee, Charity. through JESUS CHRIST ; so charity carries all back again into thee, by him. When I have done all, may I own all in thee alone ; that I, and all my actings and objects, may stand together comprehended in thee ; in that band of unity, which binds up all in eternal life ;
that

that love, which is GOD clasping the creature in himself!

“ O that I were in the light, as thou,
 “ my GOD AND FATHER, my SAVI-
 “ OUR AND REDEEMER, art in the
 “ light! that THE BLOOD OF CHRIST
 “ may cleanse me from all sin; may
 “ clear the guilt, and kill the power of
 “ sin within me! that THE BEAUTY
 “ OF CHRIST may shine forth through
 “ my spirit; and I may have fellowship
 “ and communion with CHRIST, with
 “ the FATHER, ANGELS, ALL SAINTS,
 “ IN A DIVINE LIFE!”

O grant, that I may not be spiritual
 in my studies and contemplations, and
 carnal in my affections and conversa-
 tion! that I may not think of having
 the sweet blossoms of brotherly kindness,
 virtue, and godliness, without CHRIST
 in the root by FAITH, and GOD in the
 ripe fruit by CHARITY!

May

May every Grace, as a member in the body, have his due nourishment and increase with the rest, that so I may
 “ grow to the stature of a perfect man
 “ in CHRIST !” May my discoveries, devotions, and duties, answer one another ; may my light, love, and life, go on equally in clearness, sweetness, sanctity, and self-denial !

“ May all Graces be in me and abound ; 2 Pet. i. 8.
 “ may they cover my heart and spirit,
 “ as the waters cover the sea ; may they
 “ drown my lusts, as the flood did the
 “ men of the old world !” O may there be a riches, power, and glory of Grace in me, prevailing mightily and effectually over all my corruptions !

As the sun stands in the midst of the planets as their fountain and king, so may THE PERSON OF THE SPIRIT live and reign in the midst of my Graces ; that THE SPIRIT may be their root, and

CHRIST

CHRIST IN THE SPIRIT their fruit !

“ O may I feel THE HOLY SPIRIT con-
 “ tinually abiding in my heart ; power-
 “ fully rebuking, controlling, and chan-
 “ ging all my evil ; illuminating, sanc-
 “ tifying, and comforting me ; leading
 “ me into all truth, and filling me with
 “ righteousness and holiness, with love,
 “ purity, peace, and joy !”

Health.

O Lord ! mine eyes look upward, for
 a descent of life from thee ; not down-
 ward, for an ascent of life from the
 creature. By those spiritual fountains
 of power and blessedness with thee, men
 enjoy the streams of life here below, as
 the light of things on earth subsists by
 the course of the sun in heaven over their
 heads. The life of my spirit is in those
 invisible chambers and treasures, which
 are there where thou art : by opening
 these treasures upon me, while I call
 unto thee ; and by sending forth those
 spirits of life and glory, which are at
 thy

thy right hand; do thou deliver me,
heal me, and make me to live!

All the infirmities, sicknesses, pains, tortures, that we suffer from our lusts, and from the jarring of the elements within us, thou, O JESUS, canst atone, when the physicians cannot! “ All power is given unto thee, in heaven and “ on earth,” in soul and body, for the highest and most gracious purposes of life and salvation to all thy fallen creatures! Thou canst cleanse the impurities, suppress and change the vanities and malignities, heal the disorders, and calm the winds and humours in my little world, as thou didst the winds and seas in the great world! For thou art my root, my substance; my life, my strength, my fulness; my light, my righteousness, my perfection, my glory; my true self—when, in my best state, I am but a shadow only of thee, according to the first creation! It is the beauty of nature in
me,

me, and my moral righteousness, to bear the figure of thee, and thy tabernacle, in my person; my spiritual glory, mine everlasting righteousness, to be taken up into thee, to be clothed with thee, to have my shadow drunk up into thy light, and there made substance !

Thou governeſt me, Bleſſed Saviour, with a ſweetneſs unclouded, a wiſdom unqueſtioned, a mercy unlimited, a power uncontrolled ! O that I could make a full, free, and continual ſurrender of myſelf to thy moſt righteous and holy will ! for, while I live by my own guidance and government, I ſin ; “ re-
 “ fiſt, grieve, and quench thy Holy
 “ Spirit ; ſuppreſs thy divine life with-
 “ in me ; crucify thee afreſh, and put
 “ thee to an open ſhame : ” but ſince thou haſt been pleaſed, of thine infinite love and mercy, to diſcover thyſelf to me, and in me, it is the earneſt deſire and purpoſe of my heart to live ſo no longer :
 what

what I know not, and I know nothing as I ought, do Thou continually teach me; what I cannot do, and of myself I can do nothing but sin, do Thou graciously do in me! For Thou art the King of Grace; Thou art Grace itself in the brightness of its glory, love itself in the sweetness of all its joys; in a Living Eternal Person, comprehending the Divine and Human Natures in all their excellencies and perfections; "God Blessed for ever!" "Thou art the Potter, and I the clay;" O subdue, quicken, enliven, and soften, this hard and insensible heart, that it may yield freely and joyfully to all thy impressions! form me to Thyself, for Thyself, and fill me with Thyself!

MIGHTY JESUS! Thou, who wast born of a woman without a man, of a * Virgin-Mother, canst bring forth Thy-

* The devil possesseth the principles of nature, and those only; by which he conveys himself into us, and makes us his own. JESUS CHRIST was not born in

self with all Thy Gories in my barren heart, without the contribution of any created power ! Thou, who wast eternally born of a Father without a mother, canst become the Father of a Divine Birth in me, though I have in myself no disposition or fitness for it ! O mercifully create in me that fitness and disposition, that my heart may be always prepared for the operation of Thy Redeeming Love and Mercy upon it !

O grant, that “ the life I live in the
“ flesh, may be by the Faith of Thee,
“ who hast loved me, and given Thyself
“ for me ! ” Let my life, O my SAVI-
OUR, be thine, and not mine ! Let the
life which I live by the Faith of Thee,

nature, but after a spiritual manner : a Divine Principle clothed itself with part of the Virgin’s substance ; grew up in it ; made it to subsist in Itself, and to be wholly in a Divine Person. “ The prince of this world
“ comes,” saith OUR SAVIOUR ; “ but he finds
“ NOTHING in me ! ”

be an union and incorporation with Thee, a derivation of Thy Life into mine ! Thou hast loved me above all things ; do thou possess me intirely ! Thou hast given thyself in exchange for me, to be in me instead of myself ; do thou alone form and act me !

O may my Faith, which I humbly beseech thee to preserve, to strengthen, to quicken, to illuminate, and sanctify continually, be an inseparable union of spirits between Thee my JESUS in heaven, and my soul on earth ! May I never be found alone, nor in company with vanity and sensuality, with infidelity, pride, and malignity, but Thee and me always together ; me in Thee, as mine Eternal Root ; Thou in me, as an unfading, unperishing Branch of Thyself !

Altered from Dr. JOHN EVERARD.

The Almighty Power of GOD THE FATHER, THE ETERNAL FATHER of Life, Light, and Love, vanquish and overcome, in every heart, all enmity and opposition; every thing that the spirit of this world, and the darkness, impurity, and malignity, of fallen nature prompts us to; and give us strength and power, to do and suffer his most holy and righteous will in all things !

THE MOST BRIGHT WISDOM OF GOD enlighten us, and change us into the same mind, temper, and spirit; that we may be perfectly conformed to His Heavenly Image, and become acceptable in the sight of His Heavenly Father !

The Unspeakable and Superabounding LOVE OF THE HOLY GHOST pierce through all opposition in us; kindle and unite our loves unto Himself, with a
most

most ardent and effectual turning all our powers and strengths ; so that forgetting those things that are behind, we may follow his most Sweet Calling and Affectionate Drawing, whereto, from Everlasting, The More than Most-glorious TRINITY hath predestinated us ; namely, from the love of our carnal selves, and this deceitful world, to the Enjoyment of HIMSELF in all his Spiritual Riches and Infinite Blessedness ; so that, by Grace, we may be made that, which we are not nor can be by nature. To THE ETERNAL GOD, FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT, be ascribed all Honour, Power, and Majesty ; and rendered all Reverence, Obedience, and Love, throughout Eternal Ages. Amen.

From K E M P I S.

The earth and the heavens are Thine,
O LORD, and all their fulness ! I desire
to make a free surrender of myself to
Thee, and to remain Thine for ever.

B 3

In

In singleness of heart, O LORD, I now offer up myself, a sacrifice of perpetual obedience and praise. Accept this oblation in union with the Sacred Oblation of Thy Precious Body, which I commemorate in the presence of assisting and glorifying Angels, as the Salvation of fallen man.

LORD, all the sins which, from the time I was capable of sinning to this hour, I have committed before Thee and Thy holy Angels; I offer upon Thy Propitiatory Altar, to be consumed in The Fire of Thy Love! O purify my spirit from all defilement; restore The Grace which I have lost; grant me full and free pardon, and seal that pardon with the kiss of peace! What can I do, but humbly confess and bewail my exceeding sinfulness, and incessantly implore the benefits of Thy Propitiation? Here, then, in Thy most Holy Presence, I now plead and implore them; O mercifully

cifully hear my prayer! I now detest my sins, and by Thy Grace will never more submit to their hateful tyranny: I now grieve for them in the bitterness of sorrow, and will grieve for them as long as I live, that contrition may “work
 “ in me repentance unto salvation, never
 “ to be repented of. Have mercy upon
 “ me, O God, according to Thy Loving
 “ Kindness; and according to the mul-
 “ titude of Thy Tender Mercies, blot
 “ out all my transgressions!” O save my soul, which Thou hast redeemed with Thy Precious Blood! Behold, I resign myself wholly to Thy Disposal! deal with me according to Thy Mercy, not according to my transgressions!

Small and imperfect as it is, I offer Thee all my goodness, that Thou mayst sanctify it, and impart to it new degrees of strength and beauty; and by the continual influences of Thy Spirit, mayst animate a slothful and unprofitable crea-

ture, to the attainment of that Perfection to which Thou hast called him.

I offer Thee also the desires of Thy faithful servants ; the necessities of my friends and relations ; and the distresses of all, that, for the love of Thy Name, seek to promote the good of others : that they may feel the Succours of Thy Grace, the Consolations of Thy Spirit, the Protection of Thy Power, the Pardon of Thy Mercy ; and that, delivered from all evil, they may joyfully yield Thee the tribute of everlasting thanksgiving and praise !

Lastly, I present Thee my prayers and peace-offerings for all men : particularly for those, that have slandered or oppressed me ; and for those, whom, either with or without design, I have offended, grieved, or injured : beseeching Thee to pardon all our violations of Truth, Justice, and Mercy ; and to take from our hearts suspicion, animosity, resent-

resentment, and revenge, and whatever is contrary to Charity, and tends to lessen Brotherly Love. Have Mercy, O LORD, upon all that implore Thy Mercy ! Impart Thy Grace to all that want it ! And dispose the hearts of mankind for The Operations of Thy Spirit, and the attainment of Everlasting Life ! Amen.

From K E M P I S.

O MOST benign and most loving LORD, Whom my soul ever longeth to receive ! Thou knowest my want and weakness, and the numerous evils in which I am involved ; Thou knowest how often, and how exceedingly, I am oppressed, tempted, troubled, and defiled. To Thee I come as my Sovereign Remedy, and humbly beg to be delivered, strengthened, comforted, and purified. I speak to Him Who “ know-
“ eth all things ;” Who searcheth the lowest depths of my evil ; and Who
alone

alone can restore me to Life, Light, Purity, and Peace! Thou knowest, O LORD, the good that I stand most in need of; and how destitute I am of that "Holiness, without which none can see" and enjoy Thee!

Behold, I stand before Thee, hungry and naked, begging The Bread of Life, and the Robe of Righteousness! O feed Thy famished Prodigal, clothe him with Thy precious garment! In flame his coldness, with The Fire of Thy Love; enlighten his darkness, with The Splendour of Thy Presence! O turn into bitterness, all carnal consolation; turn into patience, all adversity and distress; and turn all regard for worldly objects and interests, and for all finite good, into contempt and forgetfulness! Raise my desires to Thee in Heaven, and suffer them no more to descend and wander after the unsatisfying enjoyments of earth! Be Thou, alone, delightful and desirable to my soul for ever; for Thou,
alone,

alone, art my meat and drink, my treasure, my love, my joy, and my sole and everlasting good ! Let me not, then, depart from Thee, hungry and thirsty ; but let me feel The Operation and Power of That Mercy, which Thou hast often manifested to Thy Saints !

Thou, O LORD, art a Fire incapable of languor or decay ; a love enlightening the understanding, and purifying the heart ! O that, by Thy Presence, Thou wouldst set me all in flames, consume me intirely, tranform me into Thyself, and make me One Life, Spirit, and Love, with Thee !

From K E M P I S.

LORD ! what is my confidence in this life, and what my comfort in the possession and enjoyment of all things under Heaven ? Is it not Thee alone, O LORD, my GOD, Whose mercies are without number, and without measure ?

Where

Where hath it been well with me, when Thou wert absent? or where could it be ill, when Thou wert present? I had rather be naked, hungry, and despised, with Thee; than abound in honour, wealth, and pleasure, without Thee: would rather chuse, with Thee, to wander upon the earth, and have no place “where to lay my head;” than, without Thee, to possess a throne in Heaven. But, where Thou art, there is Heaven; and death and hell are only there where Thou art not. Thou art the desire of my soul; and to Thee, my sighs and groans, my cries and prayers, shall continually ascend! There is none that is able to deliver me from my necessities, none in whose power and goodness I can trust, but Thee, O my God! Thou art my refuge and my hope in every distress, my most Powerful Comforter, and most Faithful Friend!

Men seek themselves, and their own interest; Thou seekest only my redemption
from

from the bondage of evil, and orderest all Thy dispensations for its accomplishment. Tho' though permittest me to be exposed to the trial of various troubles, yet thou mercifully superintendest the conflict, and directest the event for my supreme and everlasting good : “ for
 “ whom Thou lovest, Thou chastenest ;
 “ and scourgest every son whom Thou
 “ receivest.” And in this awful probation, Thou art not less to be loved and praised, than when Thou fillest my soul with heavenly consolations. Thou alone, therefore, O LORD, my GOD ! art my hope and sanctuary ; with Thee I leave all my tribulation and anguish, and resign the beginning, continuance, and end of every trouble, to Thy Blessed Will !

Wherever I look for support and consolation out of Thee, I find nothing but weakness and distress : and if Thou dost not revive, strengthen, illuminate, deliver,

liver, and perserve me, the friendship of mankind can give no consolation, the strength of the mighty bring no support, the counsel of the wise and the labours of the learned impart no instruction, the treasures of the earth purchase no deliverance, and the most remote and secret places afford no protection. All persons and things, that seem to promise peace and happiness, are in themselves vanity and nothing, and subvert the hope that is built upon them : but Thou art The Supreme, Essential, and Final Good ; The Perfection of Life, Light, and Love ! and the most powerful support of thy servants, is found in an unreserved and absolute dependence upon Thee !

“ Unto Thee,” therefore, “ do I lift
 “ up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest
 “ in the Heavens !” In Thee, my GOD,
 The Father of Mercies, I place all my
 confidence ! O illuminate and sanctify
 my soul, with the influence of THY
 HOLY

HOLY SPIRIT; that being delivered from all that darkness and impurity of its alienated life which thy eyes cannot look upon, it may become The Living Temple of Thy Holy Presence, the seat of Thy Eternal Glory ! In the immensity of Thy Goodness, O LORD ! and “ in “ the multitude of Thy Tender Mercies, turn unto me ;” and hear the prayer of thy poor servant, who has wandered far from Thee into the region of the shadow of death. O protect and keep my soul amidst the innumerable evils which this corruptible life is always bringing forth ; and by the perpetual guidance of Thy Grace, lead me in the narrow path of Holiness to the realms of Everlasting Light, Love, and Peace ! Amen.

Let us begin, that being delivered
from all that shame and impurity of
its affluence, the which thy eyes cannot
look upon, it may become the living
Temple of thy Holy Presence, the seat
of thy Eternal Glory! In the immensity
of thy Goodness, O Lord, and "in
the multitude of thy Tender Mercies,
" O Lord, have mercy, and hear the
prayer of thy poor, who has with-
drawn from thee into the desert of
the shadow of thy Rock, O protect and
keep thy soul, thy innumerable
mercies which thy goodness is always
bringing forth; and by the perfect
guidance of thy Grace, lead me in the
narrow path of Holiness to the realm
of Everlasting Light, Love, and Peace.
Amen.

